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new subject for his powers ; we have seen this done by other critics, and when the hint has been taken, a failure has generally been the consequence of it. But we had rather his Lordship would confine himself to the high walk, in which he has no living rival. Many men can write prose as well, not to say better than himself, none can come near to him in poetry ; and for ourselves we are free to confess, that high as we rate the genius of Pope, and much as we prize his compositions, we think there is more of the 'impetus sacer', a more exquisite and loftier tone of poetic feeling in Childe Harold and Manfred, than in all that Pope has ever written.

ART. XXIV. *A Hebrew Grammar, with a copious syntax and praxis. By Moses Stuart, Prof. of Sacred Literature in Theol. Sem. at Andover.* Andover, Flagg & Gould, 8vo, pp. 386. 1821.

THIS grammar bodes well to the cause of oriental learning, in the great theological school with which its author is connected. While our students in theology were scattered over the country, attending to their professional pursuits singly, under the direction, it might be, of very sensible and judicious clergymen, but whose learning was worse for years spent in a constant circle of parochial duty, all appropriate learning, except that of the cut and thrust of polemic divinity, was tending constantly to languish and decay. We have already seen some of the benefits of withdrawing our young men, who are destined for the church, from solitary study, and bringing them together in schools, where provision is made for their instruction in the original languages of the scriptures and in biblical literature.

In the earliest period of the New England church, it would seem, that some of the greatest divines were well acquainted with the Hebrew language. Some of them brought this knowledge with them from the parent country, which they imparted to a few others. But we have no reason to think it was long cultivated to any great extent, and we do not find that any provision was made for instruction in Hebrew, in the university at Cambridge, till nearly a century after its foundation. From 1722 down to the period of the establishment of the theologi-

cal school in Harvard college, the Hebrew was a voluntary study for the most part ; a short period was allotted to it in the academic course, and so little of what had been learned was retained, when the student received his degree, that, in a great majority of cases, among students in theology, if they had learned any thing of the language, it was abandoned for other studies, which appeared more indispensable as a preparation for their public functions. Few, it may well be supposed, among those who obtained a parochial charge, if they should find time, would maintain or acquire that ardor in study, which is necessary to begin with the very elements of a language, so unlike any with which they had been conversant, or recommence its study, when almost every trace of their former, scanty knowledge had become obliterated. Hence it was, not long since, that a good Hebrew scholar was a prodigy in the church. But meagre as had become the amount of learning in this language, among our divines, this deficiency did not constitute the whole evil. From defective examination, from indolence, and a consequent reliance on authority, favoring the love of ease, our scholars had gone over to those French and English grammarians and philologists, who, under the pretence of facilitating the learning of Hebrew, left nothing of it but the skeleton. The bare consonants, which did well enough for those who first spoke and wrote the language, when arrayed before a European, appear to belong to a dead language indeed. For all the purposes of sound and pronunciation, he might as well be deaf and dumb ; and the reading is so arbitrary and imperfect, that nothing abides in the memory, and nothing is thoroughly understood.

Professor Stuart has, with great industry, examined the copious Hebrew grammars of the greatest oriental scholars among the Germans, and has followed in a great degree the latest and the best, namely, that of Gesenius. We cannot better explain the manner in which his grammar is conducted, than by giving his own account.

‘He flatters himself that nothing very important will be found wanting ; as the substance of Gesenius’ great work is incorporated in it. In regard to the plan of the work, he does not profess to be a mere translator of Gesenius, whose grammar is too large for common use ; but he has adopted the general method of this writer, as his model. He has made a diligent use of him for the purpose of information. In some cases he has seen reason, as he

believes, to differ from him, especially in regard to arrangement ; but not in any important matter. Whoever will take the trouble to compare, will find much fuller paradigms of nouns, and somewhat fuller of verbs, in the present work. The Hebrew accents are treated here with much more particularity, and in a different manner from that of Gesenius. The rules that respect the regulation of the tone-syllable, and which lie scattered over the whole work of Gesenius, and are so very vague in most Hebrew grammars, he has embodied in one section, for the convenience of the learner, and endeavored to render them more complete, than any to which he has had access. The tables of suffix-pronouns are more complete, and as he trusts, more conspicuously arranged, than will be found in most Hebrew grammars. The section which exhibits the forms of Hebrew nouns will be found to depart, in respect to arrangement, in a very considerable degree, from that of Gesenius, by which the labor of the student will be much facilitated, and the different kinds of forms and their respective roots rendered very easy and obvious. Other lesser changes in regard to method, and in not a few cases in regard to the completeness of rules, may be found, if any one will take the pains to make the comparison.

We do not perceive that Professor Stuart has overrated his own labors, and we feel much indebted to him for the result. If we thought it would gratify enough of our readers to reward us for the pains, we would make the comparison to which the author invites us, in order to shew how far, and for what good ends, he has deviated from Gesenius. But it will be enough to describe in a few particulars the character of his work.

In giving the 'classification, sound, and quantity' of the vowels, we regret that he has followed the innovation of Gesenius, instead of the simple plan in which the best grammarians had before been sufficiently agreed. The common distribution of the vowels is into five long and five short ; the long vowels agreeing in their order and sound with those of the German language, and other languages of the European continent, and the short agreeing, in like manner, both with them and with the English. This distribution is very simple and intelligible, while at the same time it affords sufficient variety ; and it agrees so nearly, as far as we have had opportunity to learn, with the manner in which those who are familiar with the Hebrew, whether Jews or Christians, read the language, that we confess an unwillingness to change, without

perceiving an adequate benefit. It may be true in theory, that 'in Hebrew, as in Arabic, there are only three *classes of vowels*;' and it would seem probable, from philological speculation, that there is the same analogy in this respect between the oriental languages, as between European languages of the same family. But the Hebrew is a dead language; and we must take the sounds, as they have been transmitted to us by those who had most occasion to pronounce it.

It may seem at first view that Professor Stuart has adopted the most simple plan in his classification. But it must be remembered that while in the Arabic grammar there are but three vowels, each having a distinct name; in the Hebrew there are ten (including Kamets and Hirik long and short) having as many distinct names. Now, if five of these be long and five short, as it is generally agreed, admitting exceptions, which may be pointed out, it is a great assistance to the memory to represent them by a sequence of modern vowels, either known or easily made familiar. Instead of this, if they be reduced to three classes, as partaking severally of the sound of *a*, *e*, or *u*, in order to shew their relations and commutations, the grammarian is obliged to put in the same class those which are manifestly distinct, and in different classes those which are alike; and thus he renders the names and power of the vowels more difficult to be learned and retained, than they are in the usual way.

Such are our opinions on this subject; but still we think this grammar such a valuable *thesaurus*, that we are unwilling to lay so much stress on these opinions, as to deduct from the praise to which it is fairly entitled. It is a very large book for a grammar, and may appear to a learner to render his task discouraging. With a little aid, however, his attention may be directed to what is more immediately necessary; and, as he advances in his knowledge of the Hebrew, he will find in this grammar all the facilities requisite to a thorough acquaintance with the language. We should indeed prefer a more elementary book for a beginner; but Professor Stuart's work combines with what is primarily important, such ample grammatical commentaries, as, in the end, save the trouble and expense of multiplying books of a similar kind; and we will not, therefore, find fault with what may seem to be redundant.

The copious paradigms of nouns and verbs, particularly the last, are a great excellence of the grammar of which we are

speaking. In this respect the wants of the learner have not generally been enough regarded, in the grammars of the dead languages. None of the Greek grammars, in common use, are sufficiently full in examples of the different kinds of verbs ; and scarcely too much can be done to render familiar to the student that which is so various and complex.

We cannot close without congratulating our late and present classes of students in the principal theological schools, that they are laying their foundation in the original language of the Old Testament, after the close of the dark age of Hebrew learning, as it may be termed in England and America, during the latter part of the last century, and the beginning of the present. Whatever diversity of doctrinal tenets may exist in the different institutions among us, it is fortunate that they are agreed in the importance of a thorough acquaintance with the original languages of the bible ; for on this foundation must be reared all that is true and imperishable, whether pertaining to faith or practice.